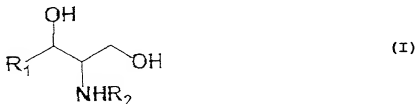


ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Provided is a clear aqueous ceramide composition comprising 1.0 to 5.0% by weight, based on the total composition, of a ceramide represented by formula (I):



wherein R_1 represents a hydrocarbon group having 9 to 17 carbon atoms; and R_2 represents an acyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms which can contain a hydroxyl group, a long-chain fatty acid having 12 to 24 carbon atoms, a nonionic surface active agent, and water. The clear aqueous composition is useful as cosmetics, bath agents, hair-care products, external preparations for the skin, skin protective preparations, particularly medical external preparations for the treatment or protection of the skin, or a component making up these preparations.